

ANOTHER HYBRID CAREX FROM IRELAND*

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Among *Carexes* collected in Ireland by Mr A. W. Stelfox in 1946, and presented to Kew, is one which appears to be a hybrid between *C. riparia* Curt. and *C. vesicaria* L. This is the first time, so far as I know, that a hybrid between these species has been recorded from Ireland, but Druce collected what he considered to be *C. riparia* × *vesicaria* near Grendon Underwood, Bucks., in June 1911, and it was recorded in *B.E.C. 1911 Rep.*, 133 (1912), as "new to Britain." Subsequently Druce reported the hybrid from Ambrosden, Oxon., June 1915; near Wytham, Berks., July 1916; and North Stoke, Essex, July 1918; in *B.E.C. Rep. for 1915*, 216 (1916); 1916, 591 (1917); and 1918, 405 (1919); respectively.

I have recently examined these specimens, as represented in Druce's herbarium, and they all seem to me to be referable to *C. riparia* itself, the Bucks. plant agreeing with Kükenthal's var. *subgracilescens*, and the others being nearer to the typical form of the species. The Irish record of the hybrid may therefore prove to be the first authentic one for the British Isles. *C. vesicaria* has been recorded from the marsh where this hybrid was collected, and Mr Stelfox says that *C. riparia* is also there, in considerable quantity.

Kükenthal's (1909: *Engl. Pflanzenreich*, 4, (20), 759) short description of European specimens of this hybrid (he cites gatherings from Sweden, Germany, and Rumania under *Carex riparia* × *vesicaria* Simonkai [1886: *Enum. Fl. Transsilv.*, 556—*C. csomadensis* Simonkai, l.c.]), agrees partly with that of the Irish plant, but he says of the female scales "cuspidato-aristatae," and he gives the male spikes as 2-4 and the female ones as 2-5, which suggests plants nearer to *C. riparia* Curt.

CAREX RIPARIA Curt. × VESICARIA L.

Plant loosely tufted. *Rhizome* extensively creeping. *Stems* 30-70 cm. tall, erect, 1.25-1.5 mm. thick, triquetrous, angles slightly scabrid above, otherwise smooth, ribbed. *Leaves* confined to about the lower third of the stem, most shorter than, but some about reaching, the apex of the terminal spike, 3-6 mm. wide, flattish, glaucous-green (at least when dried), conspicuously septate-nodulose below, less so above, strongly multinerved, midrib keeled on the under-surface and canaliculate-impressed on the upper surface, smooth below, scabrid on the margins and keeled midrib above; sheaths of the lower leaves reddish or vinaceous, the membranous front splitting up into herring-bone shaped fibres. *Spikes* 4-6, upper 3-4 male, dense-flowered, conico-cylindric, 1.5-4 cm. long, 1.5-3 mm. thick below, erect, bases subapprox-

*See *B.E.C. 1915 Rep.*, 93. (1947).

mate, spikes half overlapping one another, sessile; remaining 2 (rarely 1) spikes female, uppermost sometimes with a male apex about 0.8-1 cm. long, dense-flowered except that the lower one is often lax- or sub-lax-flowered at the base, cylindrical, 3.5-5.5 cm. long, 9-11 mm. thick (including spreading utricles) when fully developed, borne at nodes 8-10.5 cm. from each other, the upper one 6.5-9 cm. from the lowest male spike, the lower borne on a peduncle 4.5-8.5 cm. long, carried up to overlap the other which is subsessile to shortly (up to 1.5 cm.) peduncled, both erect or suberect, or lower perhaps somewhat nodding; peduncles smooth, obtusely trigonous. *Bract* of the lowest male spike subfoliaceous, shorter to longer than its spike; bracts of the remaining male spikes squamiform with long awns; bracts of the female spikes foliaceous but much smaller than the leaves and the upper smaller than the lower, about reaching up to the apex of the terminal male spike, the lower usually a little overtopping it, not or extremely shortly sheathing but with a brown, narrowly whitish-margined, membranaceous mouth in front. *Female scales* mostly about 4 mm., but some up to 4.5 mm. long, mostly about 1.75 mm. wide, ovate-lanceolate or oblong-ovate-lanceolate, obtuse at the apex, flattish to cymbiform, castaneous to spadiceous, margins rather widely but irregularly whitish-hyaline, uneven, tending to become erose, and often somewhat involute, midrib pale, often extending to the apex of the scale, sometimes shortly ex-current. *Utricles* 4.5-5 mm. long, 1.75-2 mm. broad, ovoid-conic or ovoid-lanceolate, inflated but shrunken, strongly multinerved, glabrous, yellow-green with reddish-brown patches, subcoriaceous, straight or straightish, obliquely spreading, not or extremely shortly and stoutly stipitate at the base, gradually tapering above and, at the apex, slightly narrowing into a compressed-cylindric, glabrous and smooth, not or scarcely marginate, 1 mm. long, bidentate beak, which is greenish with vinaceous or reddish stripes from the mouth downwards on each (dorsal and ventral) side; mouth straight; teeth diverging, reddish, about 0.4 mm. long. *Nut* undeveloped.

IRELAND. H.20, Wicklow; marsh south of Mizen Head, behind dunes, 5th July 1946, A. W. Stelfox.

This hybrid differs from *C. riparia* in its much narrower leaves, its more slender male spikes, the longer and more slender peduncles of its female spikes, its pale-margined scales, and its more slenderly beaked, sterile utricles. From *C. vesicaria* it differs in its glaucous leaves, and its darker and smaller sterile utricles.

I have not hitherto seen specimens which I have been able to recognize as undoubted hybrids between *C. riparia* and *C. vesicaria*.